the Government for rubber growers;

(c) whether the Government are aware that the rubber growers do not get even the minimum fixed price;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(e) whether the Government have received representations from various sectors to increase the floor price of natural rubber; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) In August, 1991, STC sold imported natural rubber (RSS-3 grade and SMR-20 grade) at Rs. 27.90 per kg. ex-godown Madras. No ungraded rubber has been sold by the State Trading Corporation of India.

(b) The Bench Mark Price fixed by the Government for the fair average quality RMA-4 grade of natural rubber is Rs. 21.45 per kg. and the lower ceiling of the price band is Rs. 20. 95 per kg.

(c) and (d). The present market price for RMA-4 grade is Rs. 21.15 per kg. It is higher than the lower ceiling price of Rs. 20.95 fixed for the grade. Slight fall in price is due to peak production season. The STC is already carrying out price support operations by procuring RMA-5 grade of natural rubber from the domestic market. STC has also been instructed now to procure RMA-4 grade of natural rubber from the domestic market.

(e) & (f). Representations have been received regarding increase in the Bench Mark Price of natural Rubber indicating that there have been increases in the inputs for cultivation of natural rubber since the announcement of the revised Bench Mark Price on 15th January, 1991. Any action in this regard will be possible only after a revised cost study is conducted in the matter by the concerned agency.

[*Translation*]

Strike in Indian banks Operating in Britain

1425. SHRI RAM SAGAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employees of Indian banks operating in Britain want on partial strike in September, 1991;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to check the recurrence of such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRTY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). A dispute on the terms of reference for arbitration of wage claims led to the situation. Negotiations were held with the employees' union after it confirmed its commitment to the provisions of the procedures agreement.

Construction of Truck lay Byes of National Highways in Bihar

+1426. SHRI CHHEDI PASWAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the places where truck lay byes have been constructed on National Highways in Bihar to provide way side amenities for drivers comfort on long routes; and